1988 suggesting that Pakistan may be assisting Iran in acquiring nuclear weapons capability. A similiar report was carried by the Sunday Observer of June 12, 1988 the veracity of which was denied by both Governments. Government are aware of Pakistan's highly advance nuclear weapons programme but have received no confirmation of reports concerning nuclear co-operation between Pakistan and Iran. Government continuously monitor all developments which have a bearing on our national security.

SAARC Foreign Ministers meeting at Kathmandu

4461. SHRI KAPIL VERMA :
SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA JAYAWANTRAO PATIL :
SHRIMATI SUDHA VIJAY JOSHI :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) what were the decisions of SAARC Foreign Ministers Conference held at Kathmandu on August 11th and 12th, 1988 ;

(b) whether the venue of the SAARC summit has been shifted from Colombo to Islamabad ; and

(c) whether the Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi will visit Islamabad to attend the summit?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH) : (a) A statement is laid on the Table of the House. (*See* below).

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Yes, Sir.

Statement

The SAARC Council of Ministers at its Fifth Session held at Kathmandu from 11-12th August, 1988 reviewed progress in the implementation of Integrated programme of Action.

The Council decided that :

(i) The Agreement on Establishing the SAARC Food Security Reserve would come into force with effect from 12th August, 1988 ;

(ii) the proposal to include Education as an area of co-operation should be examined in depth by member countries ;

(iii) the Non-governmental Organisations consisting of nationals of member countries, based in the region and operating in agreed areas of co-operation should increasingly participate in SAARC events and be encouraged to organise activities at their own initiative ;

(iv) any country in the region subscribing to the objectives and principles of the SAARC Charter may be admitted as a member of the Association by a unanimous decision of the Head of State or Government ;

(v) with the prior approval of the Standing Committee, the Secretary General may contact organisations with similiar aims and objectives for specific purposes ;

(vi) the offer of the Government of Pakistan to host the Fourth SAARC Summit in Islamabad be accepted ; and

(vii) that the Council will hold its sixth session in Islamabad prior to the Fourth SAARC Summit.